



## Reflection for September 11

### For the Love of...

By Sue D'Alessio



*For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. (John 3:16-17)*

There are dates linked with events which never completely leave our memories. For many of us, September 11, 2001 is one of those dates. We remember where we were, what we were doing when we found out, and often remember our feelings and actions which followed. The intensity of our memories may fade, but the memory is still present with us. We pray again, especially today, for all those affected and involved.

Any significant event, joyful or traumatic, can be remember-able and evoke again all the feelings and activities associated with that event. We tell the stories of those events as ways to remember, to include others in the stories

of our lives, and to remember or discover hope and healing. Also, we listen to the stories others tell, to become part of their life story, to empathize, and to weave the stories of our lives with one another and remember that we are not alone. We live in this world together in community.

The writer of John invites us into his understanding of the story of the life of Jesus, so we can be included in it, and so we can become woven together in community as we participate in hearing and telling that story. “For God so loved the world...” We, and the whole world, are invited into the story of God’s loving presence through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. The significant events from over 2,000 years ago are still remembered. The stories are told again and again, and we discover again and again the vast and expansive love and grace of God, interwoven in our lives and into our world.

What are the significant events in your life? What stories do you tell about them? How have you discovered God’s presence and love in them? How do your stories interweave into stories of your communities of family, friends and faith, and with God?

In these times, where we are surrounded by significant events which have no apparent end to them, it is helpful for us to remember stories from our past and remember how the support of others, how our family or community may have been present for us, and how God’s love was present throughout those events. We can discover hope and maybe even healing, as we connect our past stories with our present circumstances. It is helpful to remember, with the writer of John, that God’s love is a world-wide, saving, and redeeming love – and that we, as individuals and as communities of faith, are interwoven into God’s eternal story even today.

*Eternally loving God, as we remember September 11 and all who were involved and affected, we thank you for all the ways your love has transcended our pain and fears and helped to bring us into new life. For the places where we are still broken and hurt, we offer ourselves and our communities to your healing love. Where we feel stuck and frustrated, or alone and abandoned, or afraid and helpless, we offer ourselves and our communities to your saving grace. And, for our times of joy and pleasure, or celebration and rejoicing, or blessing and promise, we offer ourselves and our communities to your eternal presence. We offer these prayers and all the prayers of our hearts in the name of the redeeming Christ. Amen.*

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*May this devotion provide you with a moment of faithful reflection and care. You are involved in ministries of justice and witness, in ministries of standing up and standing with people working to create better systems and communities, in ministries of learning and searching and researching to become more aware and awakened, more technologically savvy and proficient, more virtually and personally present in your churches and communities and world. Each of us who serve as members of your Wisconsin Cabinet write these devotions in grateful prayer for you – for sustenance and buoyancy, for strength and courage, for safety and just actions, and for faith and love to be full and fulfilled in your daily lives. God's grace and blessings, God's challenge and healthy discomfort, God's Spirit and energy be with you, in the hope Christ offers us all.*

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